

# BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO COUNCIL

16 DECEMBER 2015

### INFORMATION REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

#### 2015 ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT FOR THE BRIDGEND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP) 2006 - 2021

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To report to Council the findings of the Bridgend County Borough Local Development Plan 2015 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).

#### 2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The Bridgend Local Plan (LDP) is one of the high level strategies which must be prepared by the Council. The LDP sets out in land use terms those priorities in the Corporate Plan that relate to the development and use of land provided they are in conformity with national and international policy. The AMR monitors whether the LDP and therefore the Council's land use and regeneration objectives are being successfully implemented.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 Following the adoption of the Bridgend Local Development Plan in September 2013, the Council has a statutory obligation under section 76 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).
- 3.2 The 2015 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) was submitted to the Welsh Government on the 27<sup>th</sup> October 2015 and this document can be viewed at the following link.

<http://www1.bridgend.gov.uk/media/300480/annual-monitoring-report-2014-2015-final-version.pdf>

- 3.3 Hard copies of the report can be viewed in the Members lounge.
- 3.4 The main aim of the AMR is to assess the extent to which the LDP Strategy and Policies are being achieved. Therefore, the AMR has two primary roles; firstly to consider whether the policies identified in the monitoring process are being implemented successfully; and secondly to consider the plan as a whole against all of the information gathered to determine whether a complete or partial review of the plan is necessary.

## The Requirement for Monitoring

- 3.5 In order to monitor the Local Development Plans performance, it needs to be considered against a set of monitoring aims and indicators. Chapter 7 of the LDP sets out the Monitoring Framework that forms the basis of the AMR and provides information that is required to be included by LDP Regulation 37.
- 3.6 In this context the AMR is required to identify policies that are not being implemented and for each such policy:
- Outline the reasons why the policy is not being implemented;
  - Indicate steps that can be taken to enable the policy to be implemented;
  - Identify whether a revision to the plan is required;
  - Specify the housing land supply from the Housing Land Availability Report for that year, and for the full period since the adoption of the plan; and
  - Specify the number of net additional affordable and general market dwellings built in the LPA area for that year, and for the full period since the adoption of the plan.
- 3.7 The LDP Manual supplements this requirement by setting out additional factors that should be assessed in the AMR:
- Whether the basic strategy remains sound (if not, a full plan review may be needed);
  - What impact the policies are having globally, nationally, regionally and locally;
  - Whether the policies need changing to reflect changes in national policy;
  - Whether policies and related targets in the LDP have been met or progress is being made towards meeting them, including publication of relevant supplementary planning guidance (SPG);
  - Where progress has not been made, the reasons for this and what knock on effects it may have;
  - What aspects, if any, of the LDP need adjusting or replacing because they are not working as intended or are not achieving the objectives of the strategy and/or sustainable development objectives; and
  - If policies or proposals need changing, the suggested actions that is required to achieve them.

3.8 Monitoring the Plan also accords with the requirements for monitoring the sustainability performance of the plan through the Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal (SEA/ SA).

#### **4. Current Situation**

4.1 The Council has a statutory obligation under section 61 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to keep all matters under review that are expected to affect the development of its area. In addition, section 76 of the Act requires the Council to produce information on these matters in the form of an Annual Monitoring Report for submission to the Welsh Government. This is the first AMR to be prepared since the adoption of the Bridgend LDP and is based on the period from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015 and is required to be submitted to Welsh Government by the end of October 2015.

4.2 There have been many changes since 2013 that will impact on the successful implementation of the LDP; the most notable are the changes in the Welsh Economy and the changes in the regional context. The AMR therefore considers whether the development strategy that underpins the LDP remains valid; and assesses whether or not the Strategy Policies contained in the LDP are being effective in delivering the Development Strategy and meeting the objectives of the plan.

4.3 The LDP Regulations and the LDP Manual specify what the AMR is required to include:

- An Executive Summary;
- A review of changes to national and regional policy and guidance and their implications for the LDP;
- SEA/SA Monitoring based on the SEA/SA Monitoring Framework;
- LDP Monitoring based on the LDP Monitoring Framework;
- Statutory Indicators; and
- Recommendations on the course of action in respect of policies and the LDP as a whole.

#### **Key findings of the Annual Monitoring Process**

4.4 An overview of the LDP Monitoring Data for the 1st AMR period provides an interesting insight into the implementation of the LDP over the past 12 months. The key findings are set out below:

- The 2015 Joint Housing Land Availability Study (JHLAS) indicates that 582 new homes were completed during the monitoring period 1 April 2014 to 31 March

2015 and that 4,041 dwellings have been completed in total, during the LDP period 2006 to 2015;

- The 2015 JHLAS indicates that the Council has a housing land supply, assessed against the housing requirement of the Bridgend LDP of 5.4 years;
- Since 2009 880 affordable units have been delivered, 588 of which are general needs affordable dwellings;
- During the monitoring period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 only 0.45 hectares of vacant employment land was developed. During the preceding year 2014 1.63 ha of employment land was developed;
- Within Bridgend Town Centre of the 382 commercial properties surveyed 55 were vacant – representing a vacancy rate of 14.4%;
- Within Porthcawl Town Centre of the 209 commercial properties surveyed 16 were vacant – representing a vacancy rate of 7.7%;
- Within Maesteg Town Centre of the 158 commercial properties surveyed 17 were vacant – representing a vacancy rate of 10.8%;
- Two town centre regeneration schemes have or are in the process of being delivered at Maesteg Town Centre, with the successful implementation of Maesteg Outdoor Market (where 13 out of the 14 units are occupied by retail traders) and within Bridgend Town Centre at 'Riverside' that is subject of a successful 'Vibrant & Viable Places' funding bid which will deliver a commercial and residential scheme;
- Notwithstanding the fact that LDP monitoring does not trigger the need to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, requirements of the new Housing (Wales) Act 2014 requires each local authority in Wales to undertake an assessment by February 2016 and identify a Gypsy and Traveller site if a need is identified; and
- The County Borough is making a significant contribution to national renewable energy targets. The generating capacity within and immediately adjacent the refined SSA (north of Evanstown) is 79.5 MW (mega watts) which is considerably higher than the estimated capacity within the SSA of 31 MW.

4.5 Chapter 5 of the AMR provides a detailed analysis of the success of the plan to date against the monitoring indicators and factors in terms of delivering sustainable development.

## Conclusions

4.6 There is no evidence to suggest there is a need for a full or partial review of the LDP at this time. Whilst the level of growth in some areas is slower than anticipated, evidence collected through the monitoring process clearly suggests that good progress is being made in the delivery of the majority of LDP targets, which must be seen as a positive. This may be attributed in part to the proactive approach the Council has taken to bringing forward its own land for development, accompanied by detailed development briefs, which considerably de-risks development for potential investors. Continued investment into the local economy is required to stimulate the delivery of new employment land and mixed-use regeneration sites by taking a proactive approach with landowners and developers especially where development sites are in the Council's ownership and bring forward new schemes, masterplans and development briefs to facilitate development. The development which has taken place in the County Borough of Bridgend since the adoption of the LDP, together with the projected future investment from the public and private sector will ensure that the LDP is successfully delivered.

4.7 The findings of the Annual Monitoring Report for 2015 suggest that:

1. No full or partial review of the LDP is required at this time; and
2. The actions set out in the AMR will seek to address underperformance are implemented.

## **5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules**

5.1 Following the adoption of the Bridgend LDP, the Council has a statutory obligation under section 76 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) to identify whether the policies identified in the monitoring process are being implemented successfully; and to consider the plan as a whole against all of the information gathered to determine whether a complete or partial review of the plan is necessary.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 There are no direct implications associated with this report. However, any future review of the policies and proposals contained within the Bridgend County Borough Local Development Plan will require an equalities impact assessment to be carried out.

## **7. Financial Implications**

7.1 There are no immediate financial implications as a consequence of this report.

## **8. Recommendations**

8.1 That Council notes the report.

**Mark Shephard**  
**Corporate Director Communities**

**16 December 2015**

**Contact Officer:** Susan Jones  
Development Planning Manager

**Telephone:** (01656) 643169

**E-mail:** [susan.jones@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:susan.jones@bridgend.gov.uk)

**Postal Address** Development Planning  
Communities Directorate  
Civic Offices, Angel Street  
BRIDGEND CF31 4WB

### **Background documents**

None.